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Programme planning

Proposed strategic framework for the period 2012-2013

Part two: biennial programme plan

Programme 22
Humanitarian assistance

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Overall orientation

22.1 The overall purpose of the programme is to ensure the timely, coherent and coordinated response of the international community to disasters and emergencies and to facilitate the smooth transition from emergency relief to rehabilitation and development. The legislative authority and mandate for the programme are derived from General Assembly resolution 46/182, in which the Assembly set out the guiding principles of humanitarian response. The resolution reinforced earlier decisions and resolutions adopted by the Assembly and by the Economic and Social Council concerning humanitarian assistance and the leadership role of the Secretary-General in responding to natural disasters and other humanitarian emergencies. This mandate has been confirmed and broadened through other Assembly, Economic and Social Council and Security Council resolutions. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs is responsible for the implementation of the programme and the achievement of its objectives, in line with efforts to ensure greater predictability, accountability and partnership in humanitarian response.

22.2 The strategy for implementing the programme revolves around the following: the development and promotion of a common policy on humanitarian issues for the United Nations system and its partners; the mobilization and coordination of assistance in humanitarian emergencies; the development and mobilization of United Nations capacity to expedite the provision of international humanitarian assistance; the promotion of disaster risk reduction; advocacy on humanitarian issues; and the availability of timely information on emergencies and natural disasters. The principal responsibility for implementation of disaster risk reduction activities resides with the inter-agency secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs works closely with the Development Operations Coordination Office of the United Nations Development Programme, the Peacebuilding Support Office and other members of the United Nations system to facilitate a smooth transition from relief to rehabilitation and development. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs also advocates for and contributes to stronger preparedness for more timely humanitarian assistance to emergencies through regional cooperation in accordance with its mandate.

22.3 To accomplish its mission, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs is committed to working towards greater gender equality. The Office has developed a policy on gender equality, which it is implementing through a Gender Action Plan. Tools such as the gender toolkit, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action, the Gender Standby Capacity (GenCap) project roster and advisers and the gender marker system for the tracking of gender-related fund allocations provide practical guidance on gender as a cross-cutting issue in all areas of humanitarian work where the aim is to ensure that women, girls, boys and men have access to and benefit from humanitarian protection and assistance efforts.

Subprogramme 1
Policy and analysis

Objective of the Organization: To ensure strategic and operational coherence of humanitarian response

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	Indicators of achievement
(a) Improved coordination within the United Nations system and with other humanitarian partners in response to disasters and emergencies	(a) Increased number of agreements adopted by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee on appropriate standards to improve coordination mechanisms and structures at Headquarters and in the field
(b) Improved planning, monitoring and accountability during disasters and emergency situations, including the transitional phase from relief to development	(b) Percentage of inter-agency evaluation recommendations implemented by humanitarian agencies
(c) Improved capacity by United Nations humanitarian coordinators for the protection of civilians	(c) Number of additional protection/access strategies endorsed by the humanitarian coordinators

Strategy

22.4 Substantive responsibility for the subprogramme is vested in the Policy Development and Studies Branch in New York and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee secretariat in Geneva and New York.

22.5 The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs will continue to develop a humanitarian policy agenda that identifies emerging humanitarian trends and challenges, building harmonized policy positions among humanitarian agencies based on international humanitarian law, human rights and guiding principles as contained in the annex to resolution 46/182.

22.6 The Office will foster strategic and operational coherence through the continued development of a structured policy and guidance framework for use by humanitarian coordinators, country offices of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the broader humanitarian system. The Office will also lead the development of inter-agency policies, guidance and analytical tools. Working with partners, the development of a common framework for needs assessment, monitoring and evaluation will help provide an improved evidence base for decision-making on the use of resources. The Office will work to ensure progress in mainstreaming a gender perspective in humanitarian assistance by using the gender marker system in common humanitarian action plans. The Office will work to ensure that humanitarian actions in integrated United Nations presences are properly coordinated and safeguard humanitarian principles, consistent with the Secretary-General's note of guidance on integrated missions of 2006. The Office will develop aides-memoires and diagnostic tools for political actors, such as Member States and peacekeepers, to use during crisis management to help ensure consideration of key humanitarian concerns. In addition, it will contribute to the development of training programmes and standard operating procedures to ensure

that staff and other actors in emergencies are aware of key humanitarian policies, methodologies and processes and are able to apply them flexibly and appropriately in varied contexts. The Office will help identify best practice and innovative concepts that should be disseminated widely to inform and guide policy, operational decisions and crisis management.

22.7 Moreover, the Office will support and promote the efforts of Governments of affected countries, upon their request, and those of other agencies, with the approval of the Government concerned, to assist and protect internally displaced persons. Support will be given for the establishment of effective planning capacity for the management of the transition from relief to reconstruction and development. In addition, efforts will be made to ensure that lessons learned from past experience are applied to the strengthening of future humanitarian assistance activities. The secretariat of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee will provide support to the Committee in its efforts to ensure a well-coordinated international response to humanitarian crises. Regular briefings will be conducted with Member States on these activities.

Subprogramme 2
Coordination of humanitarian action and emergency response

Objective of the Organization: To ensure a coherent, equitably supported and timely humanitarian response to alleviate human suffering in natural disasters and complex emergencies

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	Indicators of achievement
(a) Improved response to humanitarian emergencies by all United Nations operational agencies	(a) No longer than an average of five days for coordination staff to be deployed to new emergencies
(b) Increased availability and flexibility of extrabudgetary resources for humanitarian activities	(b) (i) Increased percentage of priority sectors/clusters and emergencies funded up to at least 50 per cent (ii) Increased number of Member States funding appeals in their own region
(c) Timely and coordinated use of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) in countries with new and protracted emergencies	(c) (i) Average amount of CERF funding received and available for disbursement to humanitarian crises (ii) No longer than three days between the final submission of a project proposal and its approval by CERF (iii) Increased number of countries in which agreed priority needs and programmes receive funding through CERF

Strategy

22.8 Substantive responsibility for the subprogramme is vested in the Coordination and Response Division and the CERF secretariat in New York and the External Relations and Support Mobilization Branch in Geneva.

22.9 The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs will provide advice to the Emergency Relief Coordinator on all aspects of operational decision-making in response to humanitarian emergencies through its link to resident and humanitarian coordinators and field coordination units worldwide; mobilize, coordinate and facilitate international humanitarian assistance; in collaboration with the Emergency Preparedness Section and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, enhance preparedness through support to country teams in contingency planning; lead or participate in inter-agency and interdepartmental assessment missions and offer the United Nations system information and advice on a timely basis with respect to humanitarian assistance activities, in strict conformity with the guiding principles as contained in the annex to resolution 46/182 and with resolution 58/114.

22.10 The Office will be actively involved in ensuring more predictable humanitarian finances to enable a prompt response to new or rapidly deteriorating crises, in particular through the Central Emergency Response Fund. The Office will ensure the appropriate application of the Fund guidelines and timely responses by the Emergency Relief Coordinator. While working to ensure that CERF allocations are made ever more rapidly and based on sound needs assessment, the CERF secretariat will put in place the necessary performance measurements to track the Fund's added value to beneficiaries and the humanitarian system that serves them. The Office will also provide support for the strengthening of the cooperation between assisting and recipient countries.

22.11 The Office will aim to consolidate sustainable partnerships in support of mobilizing resources for humanitarian operations and promote strengthened relationships with Member States and regional organizations on policy and operational issues. In addition, the Office will further support public-private collaboration, initiated through the World Economic Forum/Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Guiding Principles for Public-Private Collaboration in Humanitarian Action adopted in 2007. Improving flexibility and timeliness requires greater donor coherence and efforts to honour pledges quickly. The Office will work towards improving humanitarian financing though the development of standards, as well as systematic and efficient mechanisms for implementation and monitoring of funding support in emergencies. Strategic planning is supported by common humanitarian action plans in the form of flash appeals and through the consolidated appeals process. To ensure relevance and effectiveness, the Office will continue to build on lessons learned to improve the consolidated appeals process and flash appeals in support of a strengthened, structured and well-managed mechanism of coordination for humanitarian response. The Office will ensure that the particular needs of women and children are effectively addressed through the use of disaggregated data collection in the development of appeals.

22.12 Finally, the Office will continue to work towards the improvement of humanitarian coordination structures at the country, regional and international levels, in support of national efforts. The Office will ensure that all capacity-building efforts for resident and humanitarian coordinators include guidance on their

role in the development of the cluster approach while taking into account intergovernmental discussions. In this regard, the Office will ensure that all of its field staff and Headquarters support staff have the relevant knowledge to support clusters at the field level as appropriate.

Subprogramme 3
Natural disaster reduction

Objective of the Organization: To reduce risk and vulnerability to natural hazards and the impact of disasters

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	Indicators of achievement
(a) Increased capacity and commitment to implement the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters and reduce disaster risk	(a) (i) Increased number of development frameworks and policies adopted at the national and regional levels that incorporate disaster risk reduction (ii) Increased number of countries, regional and international organizations and other stakeholders reporting on progress in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action
(b) Increased national capacities for post-disaster recovery planning at all levels	(b) (i) Increased number of knowledge products (tools, methodologies, case studies, training curricula) produced by national Governments and other relevant stakeholders (ii) Increased number of countries incorporating disaster reduction measures into post-disaster recovery operations
(c) Increased level of investments for disaster reduction and recovery programmes and projects	(c) Increased number of disaster risk reduction activities financed by all relevant stakeholders

Strategy

22.13 Substantive responsibility for the subprogramme is vested in the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and its secretariat, as the focal point for disaster risk reduction within the United Nations system.

22.14 The World Conference on Disaster Reduction adopted the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters (see A/CONF.206/6 and Corr.1), setting out strategic goals, priorities for action and implementation and follow-up activities within the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction system. The focus of the subprogramme is to meet the expected outcomes of the Hyogo Framework for Action, by increasing all stakeholders' political, technical and financial commitment to achieve its objectives.

22.15 The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction secretariat will continue to act as a facilitating and coordination body on disaster risk reduction and will strive to strengthen the synergies among the disaster reduction activities of the United Nations system and regional organizations and promote socio-economic and humanitarian activities. The midterm review of the Hyogo Framework for Action will be a critical opportunity to leverage and catalyse action in reducing risk and refine the focus of its implementation in a manner that also contributes to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Particular efforts will be devoted to ensure links with and support to climate change adaptation efforts, including the use of disaster risk reduction strategies and tools for adaptation purposes, as well as to strengthen the resilience of cities, schools, hospitals and other critical social infrastructures.

22.16 The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction secretariat will also strengthen its work at the regional level for enhanced regional collaboration and effectiveness in supporting Governments. In addition, the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction secretariat will provide substantive support on disaster risk reduction to the Secretary-General, to organizations of the United Nations system and their governing bodies, and to coordination mechanisms such as the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination. It will also build on the momentum generated by the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in 2009 to strengthen the cooperation between stakeholders. The PreventionWeb will be further developed as a global disaster risk reduction information platform for all stakeholders. The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction secretariat will increase its efforts to promote cooperation among international organizations and networks to develop consistent data collection on and assessment of natural hazards, vulnerabilities and risks, impacts of disasters and progress made in implementing the Hyogo Framework and will publish regular reports. The secretariat will also promote coherence in policy development, advocacy, strategic information and knowledge management and resource mobilization.

22.17 Through its network of country offices, the United Nations Development Programme will continue to support the development and implementation of disaster risk reduction programmes and projects at the regional and national levels. A major thrust of the work will be devoted to the production of tools for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in development and recovery planning in order to empower other partners to reduce disaster risk. These tools are supported by a capacity enhancement effort, which started in 2006, to put in place national advisers in disaster-prone countries. Capacity-building support will include risk analysis and monitoring; policy and programme formulation, implementation and evaluation; advocacy and resource mobilization; and training and learning.

Subprogramme 4
Emergency support services

Objective of the Organization: To expedite international humanitarian assistance to victims of emergencies and natural disasters, including environmental disasters and technological accidents

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	Indicators of achievement
(a) Prompt mobilization of international emergency response mechanisms and tools to facilitate international humanitarian assistance to victims of disasters and emergencies, including the identification of resource requirements and timely dissemination of information	(a) International assistance and resources are provided to affected country within 48 hours following its request for international assistance
(b) Enhanced capacity and preparedness of national and international emergency/disaster management networks and partnerships in order to respond to disasters and emergencies	(b) Increased number of national and international partnerships and networks that can respond effectively to disasters and emergencies

Strategy

22.18 Substantive responsibility for the subprogramme is vested in the Emergency Services Branch in Geneva.

22.19 Support will be provided to conflict- and disaster-affected countries through the strengthening of mechanisms for emergency response; the promotion of the membership of developing and disaster-prone countries in emergency response networks; the development and strengthening of the capacities for coordination of humanitarian response; and the improvement of mechanisms, instruments and procedures for the mobilization and coordination of international assistance in cases of natural disasters and complex emergencies. In addition, support will be provided through the increased involvement of potential recipient and donor countries, using a regional approach, as well as United Nations organizations, in relevant activities, including training and exercise programmes and capacity-building for response preparedness.

22.20 Emphasis will be placed on ensuring the timely dissemination of information on the situation in countries affected by emergencies and disasters, including the identification of resource requirements, to relevant partners; activating emergency, disaster-response and preparedness tools to reduce the impact of emergencies and disasters; expanding the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination teams in different regions; standardizing operational procedures for international urban search and rescue teams; further developing a comprehensive network of partners, comprising Governments, United Nations agencies, intergovernmental and relevant non-governmental organizations and corporate actors; further strengthening and diversifying the rapid response and surge mechanisms and improving the coordination between the various mechanisms; and strengthening national and regional civil-military and military-military coordination, upon the request of Member States, for more efficient and coherent support to humanitarian relief operations, by implementing the United Nations civil/military coordination training programme. Emphasis will also be placed on increasing the extent to which acute

environmental impacts of disasters are identified and addressed during the response phase as well as strengthening coordination in the field of humanitarian logistics and preparedness through expanded cooperation with relevant partners.

Subprogramme 5
Humanitarian emergency information and advocacy

Objective of the Organization: To ensure effective advocacy of humanitarian principles and knowledge-sharing, serving populations affected by disasters and emergencies

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	Indicators of achievement
(a) Enhanced awareness of and regard for humanitarian principles and concerns	(a) (i) Increased number of interviews requested by media outlets, with the officials of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, on humanitarian principles and actions (ii) Increased number of queries received by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs from media outlets concerning humanitarian principles and actions
(b) Strengthened partnerships with members of the humanitarian community for information-sharing, coordination and standardization	(b) Increased number of new agreements on standardized information-sharing endorsed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee

Strategy

22.21 Substantive responsibility for the subprogramme rests with the Communications and Information Services Branch.

22.22 The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs will continue to support the Emergency Relief Coordinator and the humanitarian community in advocacy aimed at encouraging Member States and parties to conflict to put humanitarian principles, as set out in General Assembly resolutions 46/182 and 58/114, into practice, and through advocacy centred around international humanitarian law, the protection of civilians in armed conflict and the safety and security of aid workers. Sustained efforts will continue to be made on advocacy aimed at maintaining the distinction between civilians and combatants.

22.23 The Office will also seek to develop further strategies to highlight forgotten emergencies and natural disasters, especially through agreed-upon key messages targeting national and international media utilizing its web platform (OCHA, see http://ochaonline.un.org/) and by advocating jointly or independently with non-governmental organizations, civil society groups and academic institutions to highlight humanitarian crises. The Office will also provide services — including press releases, media alerts, interviews and public briefings, op-eds, crisis communication and advocacy strategy design — designed to amplify country-specific strategies and messages thereby strengthening overall humanitarian advocacy.

22.24 Another vital aspect of the subprogramme is to provide timely and reliable information on unfolding emergencies and natural disasters in order to inform decision-making and support humanitarian action on the ground. The Office will further strengthen the systems for collection, analysis, dissemination and sharing of humanitarian information through expanded networks, coverage and reach. This includes updating and improving its principal websites, namely OCHA and ReliefWeb, as well as the Integrated Regional Information Network, its independent field-based humanitarian news service. Partnerships with other members of the humanitarian community for information-sharing, coordination and standardization will be further enhanced. The Office will also help establish common tools for establishing a knowledge base for the humanitarian community.

Legislative mandates

General Assembly resolutions

46/182	Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations
47/120 A and B	An Agenda for Peace: preventive diplomacy and related matters
52/12	Renewing the United Nations: a programme for reform
60/1	2005 World Summit Outcome
60/124	Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations
62/94	Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations
62/208	Triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system
64/76	Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations
64/77	Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel

Economic and Social Council resolutions

2009/3	Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Security Council resolutions

1738 (2006)	Protection of civilians in armed conflict
1861 (2009)	Extension of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad
1894 (2009)	Protection of civilians in armed conflict

1906 (2009) Extension of the mandate and capacity of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Subprogramme 1
Policy and analysis

General Assembly resolutions

56/89 Scope of legal protection under the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel

61/117 Applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other occupied Arab territories

62/134 Eliminating rape and other forms of sexual violence in all their manifestations, including in conflict and related situations

63/147 New international humanitarian order

64/75 Participation of volunteers, "White Helmets", in the activities of the United Nations in the field of humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and technical cooperation for development

64/129 Assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa

64/162 Protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons

Security Council resolution

1890 (2009) Extension of the authorization of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan

Subprogramme 2
Coordination of humanitarian action and emergency response

General Assembly resolutions

56/112 Emergency assistance to the Sudan

57/103 Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and rehabilitation in Tajikistan

57/148 Humanitarian assistance to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

58/24 Emergency humanitarian assistance to Ethiopia

58/26 Emergency humanitarian assistance to Malawi

59/214 Assistance to Mozambique

59/215 Humanitarian and special economic assistance to Serbia and Montenegro

59/216	International assistance for the economic rehabilitation of Angola
60/217	Economic assistance for the reconstruction and development of Djibouti
60/218	Humanitarian assistance and rehabilitation for Ethiopia
60/219	Assistance for humanitarian relief and the economic and social rehabilitation of Somalia
61/219	International assistance for the economic rehabilitation of Angola
62/9	Strengthening of international cooperation and coordination of efforts to study, mitigate and minimize the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster
63/18	The situation in Afghanistan
63/136	Humanitarian assistance and reconstruction of Liberia
63/147	New international humanitarian order
63/279	International cooperation and coordination for the human and ecological rehabilitation and economic development of the Semipalatinsk region of Kazakhstan
64/74	Humanitarian assistance, emergency relief and rehabilitation effort for El Salvador in response to the devastation caused by Hurricane Ida
64/125	Assistance to the Palestinian people
64/129	Assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa
64/250	Humanitarian assistance, emergency relief and rehabilitation for Haiti in response to the devastating effects of the earthquake in that country
64/251	International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development
64/226	Assistance to survivors of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, particularly orphans, widows and victims of sexual violence

Security Council resolutions

1870 (2009)	Extension of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan
1881 (2009)	Extension of the mandate of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur
1891 (2009)	Extension of the mandate of the Panel of Experts established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1591 (2005)

Subprogramme 3
Natural disaster reduction

General Assembly resolutions

54/219	International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction: successor arrangements
63/137	Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster
63/215	International cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon
63/217	Natural disasters and vulnerability
64/200	International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
64/251	International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development

Subprogramme 4
Emergency support services

General Assembly resolutions

56/99	Emergency response to disasters
60/13	Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the aftermath of the South Asian earthquake disaster — Pakistan
60/220	Humanitarian assistance and rehabilitation for El Salvador and Guatemala
62/9	Strengthening of international cooperation and coordination of efforts to study, mitigate and minimize the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster
63/137	Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster
64/251	International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development

Subprogramme 5
Humanitarian emergency information and advocacy

General Assembly resolutions

62/91	Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster
63/137	Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster